



ILLUSTRATED

NAMOKĀRA MAHĀ MANTRA



- ☛ Your soul is an unending source of infinite energy.
- ☛ Development of inner power (soul-energy) is the foundation of supreme self-confidence.
- ☛ His soul is strong, whose mind is alert.
- ☛ The fears, obstacles and problems encountered by a strong soul are automatically eliminated.
- ☛ All the achievements of the world fall in his lap.....
- ☛ Do not wander around to know the secret of success, happiness, peace and progress in life.
- ☛ Try to grasp properly the form of the Mahāmantra Namokāra.
- ☛ Start regular chanting and meditation of this mantra with deep faith and devotion.
- ☛ Then,
- ☛ What you experience would be like a miracle.
- ☛ Every page of this book will be helpful and useful for you.

—Upadhyaya Keval Muni



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ILLUSTRATED NAMOKĀRA MAHĀMANTRA

[Forms of five venerables, Importance of *Namokara*, Methods of meditational practices, Benefits of *Namokara* and (in appendices) various experiments with Mantras]

Guidance

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English Translation

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FOREWORD

The inner force (the power of the soul) is the most vital force the human beings have. Meditation, repetition, chanting, eulogising, devotion, veneration, etc., are all instruments for awakening that infinite force. With the help of the God, the Guru, a mantra or other such sources we may develop and sharpen our inner powers. All miracles have their source in the developed and intense inner powers.

Namokāra Mahāmantra is an extraordinary mantra. It is aimed at visualisation, remembrance, pondering, meditation and realisation of the fully developed and the developing pure forms of the soul and not at some personified deity. That is why this mantra is eternal and perpetual.

The common mantras give mundane benefits only, but the extraordinary mantras give mundane as well as spiritual benefits. As such the *Namokāra Mantra* is believed to be the all-fulfilling unique spiritual mantra. Reading what is available in the Jain literature about the inconceivable powers of this *Mahāmantra* the mind is flooded with faith and belief. Every pore becomes full of elation and there arises a strong desire to depend on this *Mahāmantra* absolutely.

So much has been written about the greatness, form, practices, experiments and other such topics that it is impossible to read in one life time. But still the demand for new books from the devotees continues.

It is probably for the first time that such a beautiful and live-illustrated publication of the *Namokāra Mahāmantra* has been done. Thus it is unique and unparalleled.

Illustrations have their own utility and meaningfulness. Illustrations make it easy to understand quickly and naturally a subject that is difficult to grasp even with the help of volumes of books, serious discourses or long discussions. The process of stabilising mind with the help of visualisation of a thing has been termed as *piṇḍasthadyāna* (on physical objects), *padasthadyāna* (on syllables or sounds), and *rūpasthadyāna* (on the divine form) in the *Yogaśāstra*.

Plenty of detailed and probing study, pondering and analysis of many related works has been put in while conceptualising and laying out the illustrations of this book. There are numerous problems in giving form to the formless. I have tried my best that the overall form, methods of meditation, process of chanting, chromatology and the multifaceted uses and benefits of the *Namaskāra mantra* are presented with the help of imaginative and attractive illustrations so that millions of Jains, having faith in the *Namokāra mantra*, may understand this deep subject. Thousands of Jain youth may easily understand the concepts of *Arihanta*, *Siddha*, *Ācārya*, *Upādhyāya* and *Sādhu* and may take interest in the meditation and chanting of the supreme venerables.

They will also be able to utilise the miraculous effects of the *Namokāra Mahāmantra* in solving the economic, family, social and psychological problems that mostly arise out of mental feebleness.

For example see the 'The Self Protection Shield' (Illustration)

The security of life and wealth is the most important subject in modern life. Everyone is worried about his security. The self-protection shield constituted with *Namokāra* is an astonishing and miraculous solution of this problem. This shield increases our inner power and self confidence and any attack, blow or accident is automatically avoided.

We hear of many incidents of removal of ailments, poverty, fears, and torments of many a people with the help of *Namokāra* repetitions. Experiences of wish-fulfillment have also been heard of. As such, without any doubt it can be accepted that the *Namokāra mantra* is helpful in tackling the problems, difficulties, worries, and hurdles of life ; in fact it is the most effective help for the soul.

But if the *Ṇamokāra* meditation is done only for mundane benefits its divine spiritual benefits may be lost. As such it should always be aimed at great spiritual goals; the ordinary worldly goals will be achieved automatically.

With the view to make the coverage wide and complete, the illustrations about the *Ṇamokāra Mantra* also include those about colour meditation, syllable meditation, method of chanting, self-protection shield etc. These will prove to be of great help for the meditators and chanters. We have tried to use the medium of story-illustration to highlight the use and benefits of the *Ṇamokāra*, not just to entertain.

At the end there are five appendices where those topics have been elaborated which are given in brief in the illustrated section due to space limitations. The inclusion of 2 real life incidents of the miracle of *Ṇamokāra* and the Mantras for pacification of the Planets in the appendices has enhanced the grip and the usefulness of the book. In the end we have given the famous Sarvatobhadra *ānupūrvī* (the numerical combinations of chanting).

We had published the *Illustrated Bhaktāmara Stotra* about a year back. That too was a new experiment in its style of presentation. It was succesful beyond any expectations. Encouraged by this we determined to present to our readers this more useful work with an alround improvement in production techniques.

The credit for inspiring, guiding and encouraging the publication of this work mainly goes to the senior saint of the *Śramaṇa Saṅgha*, *Upādhyāya Śrī Kewal Muniji*. While *Bhaktāmara* was in the process of publication he had wished that another such useful publication should also be taken up.

Revered *Upādhyāyaśrī* is a great thinker. He is well versed in radical visualisation and conceptualisation. He is an endowed person and he recognises and appreciates ability. He has created volumes of works, in new and popular style, aimed at strengthening Jain values in the new generation. It is a very important contribution to Jain literature. Thanks to the concept and inspiration of *Upādhyāyaśrī* that I have been able to give shape to this publication.

The feeling of encouragement imparted by my devoted wife *S. Līlā Surānā* has also been helpful in timely completion of this project. The contribution and co-operation of the artist *Śrī Puruṣottam Singh* and the printer *Śrī Brij Mohan Śivahare* is also worth mentioning.

My thanks to *Śrī Surendra Bothara* for this English translation and his effort to bring it as close to the original as possible. I feel duty bound to thank the authors and publishers of all the books from where I have drawn valuable assistance in planning this *ILLUSTRATED ṆAMOKĀRA MAHĀMANTRA*.

Shrichand Surana 'Saras'

Diwakar Prakashan,
Lila Niketan,
AGRA



THE NAMOKĀRA MAHĀMANTRA

Jains throughout the world chant this great incantation (mantra) with full faith and belief. Through this mantra one invokes pure soul, not any individual. It has five lines, meaning :

- I bow before the Arihantas. (Paying homage I convey my veneration to the conquerors of Karmas.)
- I bow before the Siddhas. (Paying homage I convey my veneration to the perfected and liberated souls.)
- I bow before the Ācāryas. (Paying homage I convey my veneration to the leaders of Jain order.)
- I bow before Upādhyāyas. (Paying homage I convey my veneration to the teachers of the scriptures.)
- I bow before all the Sādhūs in the world. (Paying homage I convey my veneration to all the mendicants/monks in the world.)

Sincerely done, this five-fold veneration to pure souls wipes away all sins. It is the most auspicious.

There are 35 letters in the five mantra-lines and 33 in the auxiliary lines. This 68 letter *mahā-mantra* is an all-fulfilling, beneficent and eternally perfect mantra.

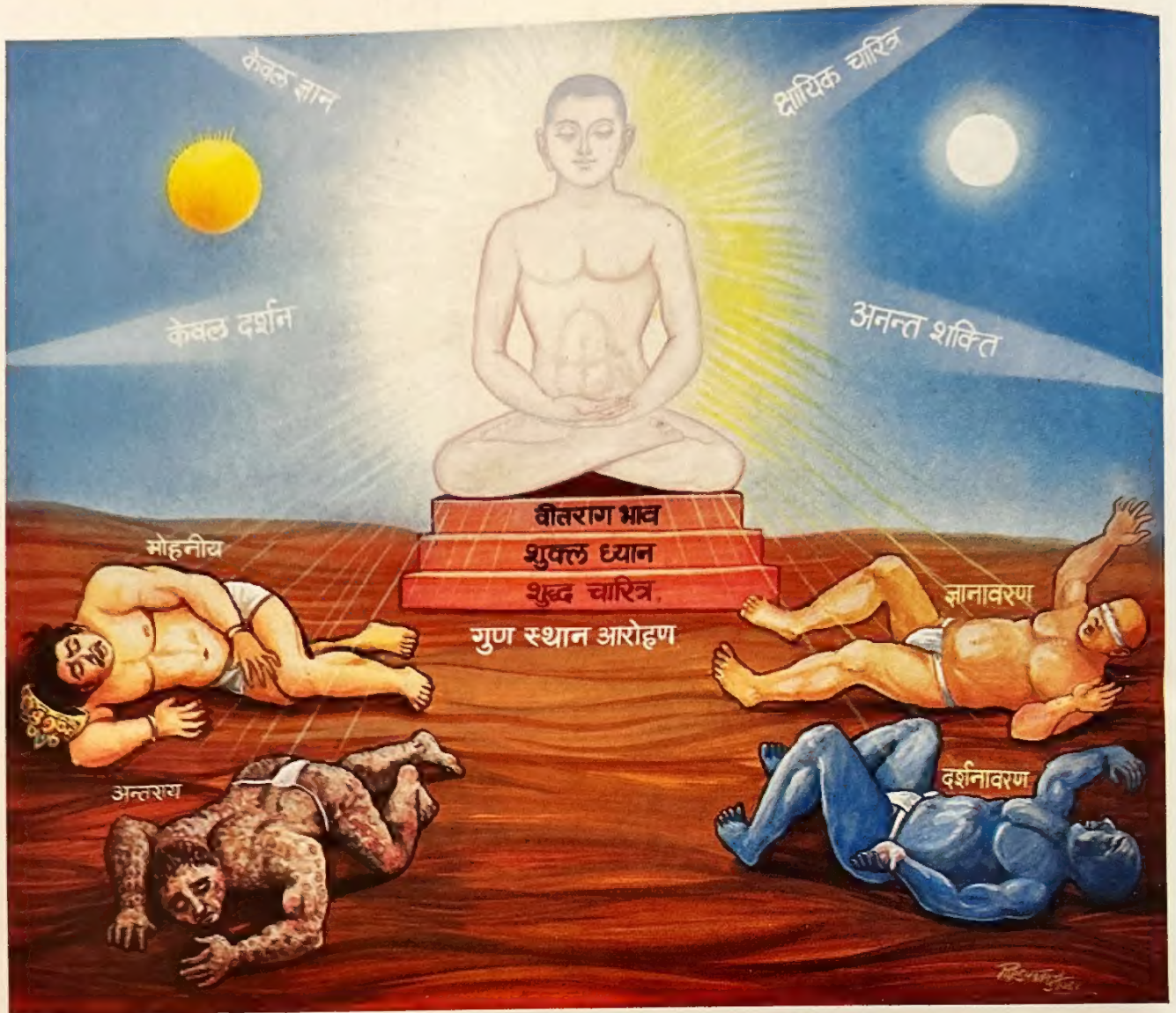
Illustration : In the illustration it is shown that this mantra is supreme in all the three worlds—the Nadir (symbolised by water), the Earth (symbolised by land) and the Zenith (symbolised by sky). It is revered by the sun, the moon, gods, demi-gods, demons, human beings and all the other beings in the universe.

The sounds inherent in the Namokāra Mantra have inconceivable power. Every single letter here is a mantra in itself. When one meditates over it with pure and stable mind he becomes safe from torments, fear and evil; it protects like a shield.

It subdues the astrological mis-influences of the planets and saves from the torments caused by evil spirits and ferocious creatures. It enhances well-being, happiness and wealth.

He who practices its meditation attains heaven and liberation.

N.B. Both the pronunciations of the first letter—'Namo' (णमो) and 'Namo' (नमो) are correct.



॥ NAMO ARIHANTĀṆAM ॥

1. (A) *The Conception of Arihanta* : The word Arihanta (Ari+hanta) means the destroyer (*hantā*) of enemy (Ari). The concept of Arihanta is defined as :

Aṭṭhavihaṃ pi ya kammaṃ aribhūyaṃ hoi sayala jīvāṇaṃ.

Taṃ kammaṃ arihantā arihantā teṇa vuccanti.

अष्टविहं पि य कम्मं अरिभूयं होइ सयल जीवाणं । तं कम्ममरिहंता अरिहंता तेण बुच्चंति ॥

Eight types of karmas (micro particles that adhere to the soul having energy to bound it) are the enemies of the soul in mundane body. The destroyers of these eight enemies in the form of karma are called arihantas.

The most potent enemies of the soul are inner vices like infatuation, etc. These vices have been divided into eight groups and are called eight karmas. These eight karmas are the only foes of the soul. No one in this world has any enemy other than these karmas. The four strongest and vitiating karmas (the *ghātī*—obscuring the inherent qualities of soul—karmas) are :

1. *Mohanīya* (illusory) : This includes attachment, greed, aversion and passions. Illusion is the worst enemy of the soul. It is the king of karmas. 2. *Antarāya* (Power hindering) : This karma obstructs the development and spread of the powers of the soul. 3. *Jñānāvaraṇa* (Knowledge obstructing) : The soul has infinite power of knowledge. But the *jñānāvaraṇa* Karma impedes this power like a veil over the eyes. 4. *Darśanāvaraṇa* (perception obstructing) : This obstructs the indistinguishable perception of common things.

Illustration : The Jain system of purification of soul has formulated fourteen levels of these are termed as *guṇasthāna*. In order to destroy these four karma-enemies the mendicant ascends over the seventh (soul purification step—*गुणस्थान*) *guṇasthāna* where all the evil karmas are absent, pure meditation (the twelfth *guṇasthāna*) and feeling of detachment (the thirteenth *guṇasthāna* of freedom from attachment and aversion). He, then, defeats the four karma-enemies with the help of the bright and powerful rays of his pure penance and meditation. Becoming the conqueror of self, he attains the position



of Arihanta. After this, there manifests in the soul the divine light of the infinite quadrant of (1) pure character (*Kṣāyika cāritra*), (2) Infinite potency (*Ananta vīrya*), (3) Omniscience (*Kewal Jñāna*) and (4) Pure perception (*Kewal darśana*).

This line *Ṇamo Arihantāṇaṁ* is visualized in white colour.

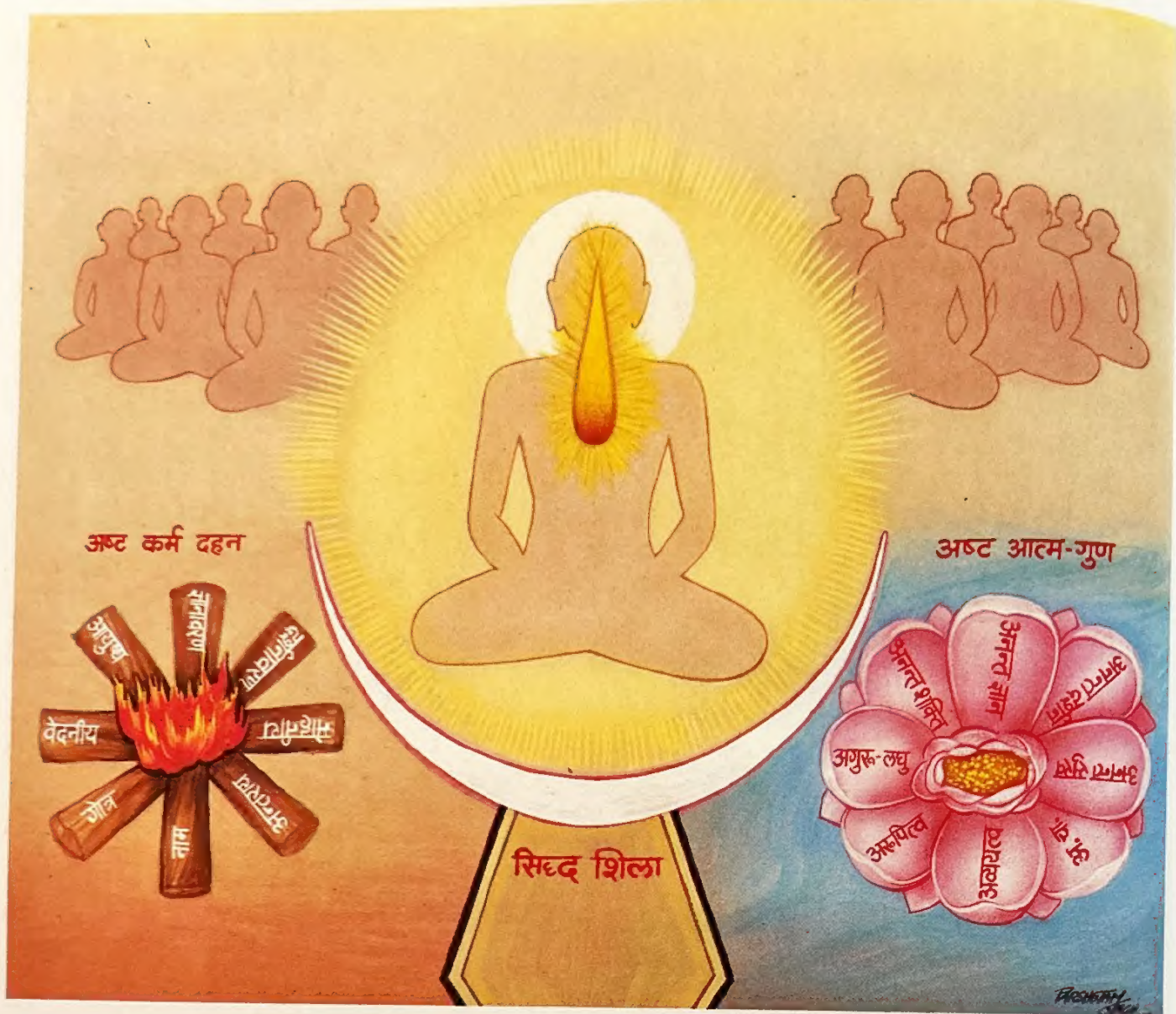
1. (B) The direct view of the Lord Arihanta :

Read observing the Illustration : Possessing the infinite quadrant, the Arihantas are unique individuals having many divine superlatives with limitless grandeur. When they sit in the *Samavasaraṇa* (the religious assembly of a *Tīrthaṅkara*) they are adorned with eight felicitations namely : 1. The *Aśoka* tree, 2. The triple canopy, 3. The divine throne, 4. The pair of divine whisks, 5. The divine shower of flowers, 6. The divine orb, bright as the sun, 7. The divine drums, and 8. The divine speech, clearly audible upto one kosa or approximately 9.09 miles and comprehensible to all living beings. In his assembly sit angels, demons, human beings and the creatures who are natural enemies like lion and goat, snake and mongoose, peacock and snake, forgetting their enmity and comprehending his discourse in their respective languages.

Drought, flood, storm, epidemic and other such natural calamities as well as war and other man-made problems do not occur around the place where the Lord Arihanta dwells.

The meditation of the divine form of the Lord Arihanta, adorned with these twelve attributes, evokes benign feelings. Even an enemy is affused with the feelings of love, respect and friendship. Fear and other such feelings are removed. Peace and strength grow. Feeling of detachment surfaces.

First, look at the illustration attentively, then close the eyes and try to visualise the form of the Lord Arihanta. With every breath utter the line *Ṇamo Arihantāṇaṁ* and practice to absorb that form in your mind. Continue to repeat '*Ṇamo Arihantāṇaṁ*' with every inhalation and exhalation. This would help the growth of the feeling of submission toward the Lord Arihanta. Proximity with the Lord will be experienced. A sensation of union with the Arihant will be felt.



NAMO SIDDHĀṆAM

2. The Conception of Siddha :

Siddha is that soul which has achieved complete fulfilment of all its desires ; also remembering it and thinking and meditating about this supreme soul fulfils all desires.

The Arihanta, who has already destroyed the four ghātī (vitiating) Karmas, when destroys the remaining four aghātī (non-vitiating or resultant) Karmas namely (1) *Vedanīya* (emotion evoking), (2) *Nāma* (form determining), (3) *Gotra* (status determining) and (4) *āyusya*, (age determining), becomes a Siddha.

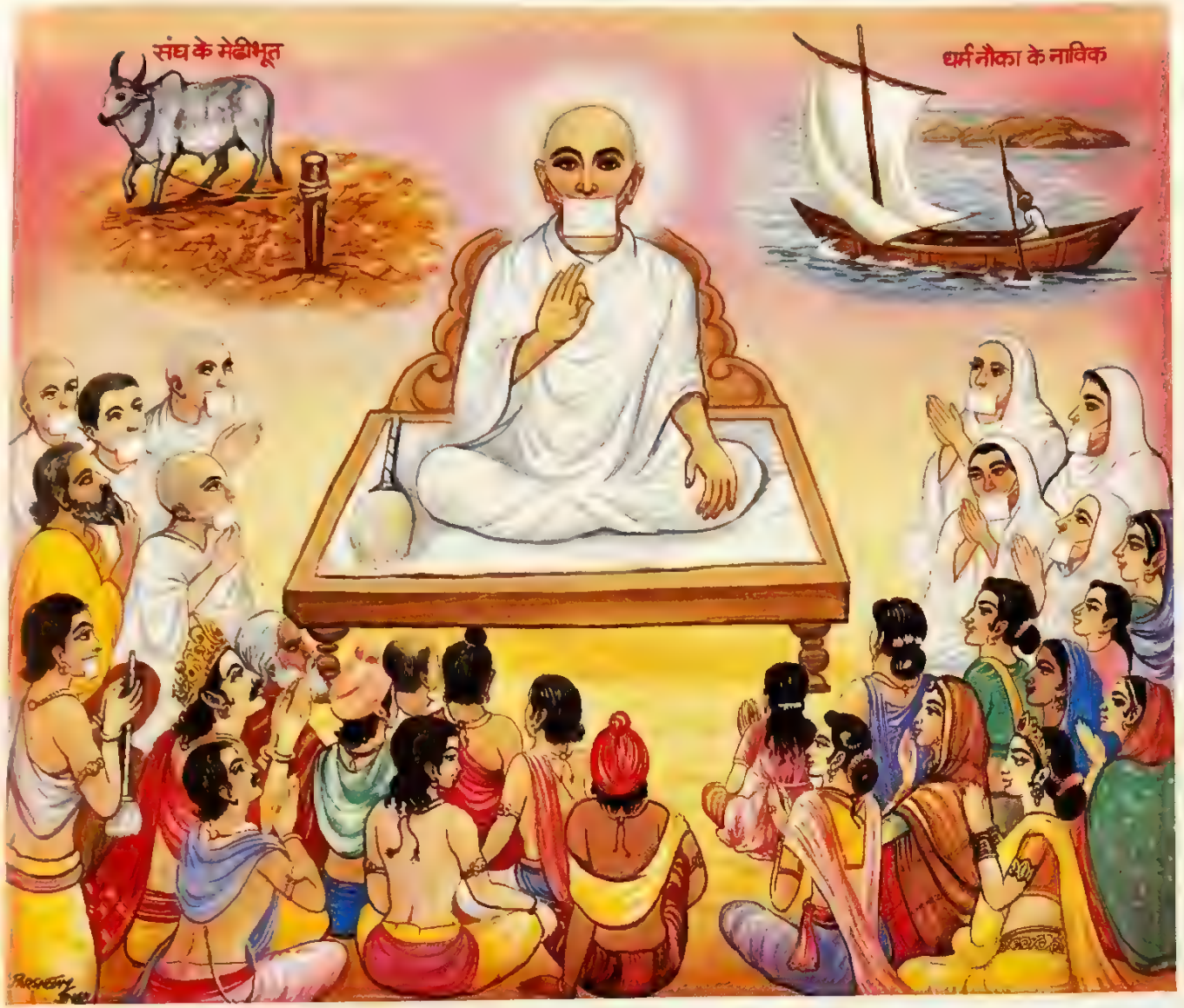
Illustration : Concentrate on the illustration and observe : The soul attains the Siddha state that is free of all karmas by burning and reducing to ash all the eight karmas, shown as pieces of wood, in the fire of penance, meditation, etc. As a lotus flower blooms when sunlight falls on it, eight natural attributes of the soul spontaneously appear with the destruction of eight karmas.

The eight natural attributes or the inherent powers are shown as petals of a blooming lotus. These are : 1. Infinite knowledge, 2. Limitless perception, 3. Un-ending happiness, 4. Flawless conduct, 5. Supreme power, 6. Formlessness (a form without name, dimension and shape), 7. Masslessness (equanimity), and 8. Indestructible constitution. After liberation the Siddha soul exists at the crescent shaped Siddha loka (abode) situated at the edge of the universe.

In this Siddha loka (abode) innumerable souls exist in aural form. As a flame fuses into another, innumerable souls in their eternal aural form fuse and occupy the same space but still maintain their individual existence.

While concentrating on the Siddha if one meditates about its complete healthy, blissful, all-endowing and eternally happy form, the same attributes start appearing within one's own soul.

The visualization of this line *Namo Siddhāṇam* is done in red colour.



ṆAMO ĀYARIYĀṆAM

3. The Conception of Ācārya :

Arihanta and Siddha are the gods of gods, (देवाधिदेव) i.e., God. The *ācāryas* are said to be the leader of dharma (religion).

(Read with reference to the illustration) The duty of the *ācārya* is to preach the religion of right faith, right knowledge, and right conduct to the four-fold religio-social organisation comprising of *sādhu* (monk), *sādhvī* (nun), *śrāvaka* (layman) and *śrāvikā* (lay-woman). He is also supposed to ensure that he and his organisation follows the prescribed norms of good conduct, restraints, rules, and discipline.

Illustration : Like the peg in the barn around which the ox moves, the *ācārya* is the axis around which the religious organisation moves. The *ācārya* is the captain and navigator of the ship of religious organisation.

The religious life of an *ācārya* is supposed to have the following thirty six qualities :

(1 – 5) Discipline of the five physical senses, (6 – 14) observation of celibacy with nine guptis (restraints), (15 – 18) routing of the four passions like anger, etc., (19 – 23) complete observation of the five great vows like *ahimsā*, etc. (24 – 28) pursuance of the five conducts like *jñānācāra*, (knowledge), etc. (29 – 33) observation of the five rules of vigilance like *īryā samiti* (vigilance of movement), (34 – 36) observation of three guptis (restraints) like manogupti or restraint of thought, etc.

Besides these, an *ācārya* has many more qualities like adaptability, impressive oration, hold over the Jain organisation, etc.

As we meditate over 'Ṇamo āyariyāṇam' we get determination for good conduct and inner strength for following lofty ideals. Concentrating over this line gives rise to pious feelings, purifies attitudes, and disciplines intense passions. The colour attributed to this line is golden yellow.



ṆAMO UVAJJHĀYĀṆAM

4. The Conception of Upādhyāya :

The Sanskr̥ta form of the Prakṛta word *uvajjhāya* is *upādhyāya*. Up—means near. Adhyāya—means to study. Those from whom one can get the knowledge of the scriptures are *upādhyāyas*. They are like torches of knowledge.

Illustration : *Upādhyāya* is like a burning lamp that lights other lamps with the touch of its flame of knowledge. As donating eye to a blind is a magnanimous deed, giving knowledge to an ignorant is a great virtue. This pious work is done by *upādhyāyas*.

The eleven volumes of *Aṅga Śruti* (preachings of *Tīrthaṅkara Mahāvīra* and scribed by *gaṇadharas*, and twelve *Upāṅga Śruti* (subordinate scriptures to the *aṅgaśruti* but scribed by *ācāryas* other than *gaṇadharas*) (on the table to the right of the *Upādhyāya*) are jointly called the *Gaṇipīṭaka*. These canons form the foundation of the knowledge in the Jain religion. To do deep study of these, to guide others openly in proper study and to answer queries and clear doubts of disciples is the work of the *upādhyāya*.

The twenty five qualities of *upādhyāya* are : (1 – 11) – the eleven *Aṅgas*, (12 – 23)—the twelve *Upāṅgas*, (24)—*Carāṇa sattarī* (seventy general rules of monks) and (25)—*Karāṇa sattarī* (seventy special rules observed by monks).

To meditate over the *Ṇamo Uvajjhāyāṇam* line as the flame of knowledge is helpful in attaining knowledge and education. This line is visualized with a blue glow. The blue colour imparts peace and tranquillity and helps in concentration.



NAMO LOE SAVVA SĀHŪṆAṀ

5. The conception of Sādhu :

The *Sādhu* is the symbol of austere spiritual practice. The *Sādhu* is a live combination of penance and tolerance. The *Sādhu* is a flowing stream of compassion, good-will, equanimity and purity.

The twenty seven qualities of a *Sādhu*, mentioned in the canons, are as follows—

(1 – 5) Observer of five great vows, (6 – 10) Controller and discipliner of the five senses, (11 – 14) Victor of the four passions, (15) Truth of feeling—truth continues to resonate in his feelings and thoughts, (16) Truth of conduct—his behaviour and conduct are truthful, (17) Truth of speech—there is uniformity in his speech and action, (18) Tranquillity of mind—he is a tranquil and contented in mind, (19) Tranquillity of speech—he is disciplined and ethical in speech, (20) Tranquillity of body—he is disciplined in physical activity, (21) he is forgiving, (22) he has feelings of detachment, (23 – 25) he is deeply engrossed in practices leading to purity of faith, knowledge, and conduct, (26) he is equanimously tolerant to pain and sorrow, and (27) he is free of the fear of death.

Illustration : A *Sādhu* carries the five mountains of great vows (पंच महाव्रत) (non-violence, truth, non-stealing, celibacy and detachment) on his strong shoulders. He disciplines the five senses depicted by eyes, ears, nose, tongue and limbs (body). He is equanimous towards both, who bow and respect him, as well as who, driven by anger, hurt his body and feelings. A *Sādhu* is not afraid of a snake or a lion and as such the ideal example of the definition—*Samayāe Samaṇo hoi* (he who is equanimous is a *śramaṇa*).

The meditation over the line '*Namo loe savva Sāhūṇaṁ*' is done in sparkling black colour and it enhances the feelings of patience, forgiveness, pity, tolerance, discipline and compassion.

Note—For explanation see Appendix



THE GREATNESS OF NAMOKĀRA

The Jain ācāryas have said :

Jiṇa sāsaṇassa sāro caudas puṇvāṇaṃ jo samuddhāro,

Jassa maṇe ṇavakāro saṃsāro tassa kiṃ kuṇai? –Namaskār stotra, 25

जिणसासणस्स सारो, चउदस पुव्वाणं जो समुद्धारो । जस्स मणे णवकारो, संसारो तस्स किं कुणइ ?

This *ṇamokāra mantra* is the essence of Jain dharma. It is the butter churned out of the fourteen *pūrvas* (the ocean of the knowledge revealed by the *Tirthaṅkara*). He, who absorbs this remains untouched by the mundane world.

The bearer of the fruit of heaven and liberation, the great *ṇamokāra mantra* is far superior to the other wish-fulfilling divine things like—(*cintāmaṇi ratna* (wish-fulfilling gem), *kalpavṛkṣa* (divine tree), *kāmadhenu* (divine cow), *kāmakumbha* (divine pitcher), *amṛta kalaśa* (ambrosia pot), etc.

Illustration : Look at the illustration and observe the following :

1. The butter or the essence extracted by churning the fourteen *pūrvas* is the five line mantra beginning with *ṇamo arihantāṇaṃ*.
2. According to mythology, when the gods and demons jointly churned the ocean the best of the thing they got was the pitcher of ambrosia. Similarly, by churning all knowledge, science, scriptures and mantras the ambrosia-pot we got is known as the *pañca parameṣṭhī namaskāra mantra*.
3. Through its divine power the wish-fulfilling-gem bestows the desired things like house, gems, cloth, etc. But this *mahāmantra* bestows everything even without asking, just by chanting.
4. As the *sudarśana cakra* (the disc weapon) of the *Vāsudeva* annihilates all enemies, so the *ṇamokāra mantra* destroys all impediments, fear, suffering, disease, poverty, etc.



5. As the *kāma-kumbha* (the divine pitcher) delivers eatables on demand,
6. As the divine tree delivers desired fruits.
7. As the divine cow gives abundant milk products.

Similar, but more effective is the *ṇamokāra* mantra.

If one meditates over it with pure conscience he gets spiritual capacity and power besides the mundane pleasures and wealth. It is capable of bestowing all pleasures in this life as well as the immortal fruit of liberation in the next life.

These lines from the '*Namaskāraṇa* stotra couplet, 9 are worth mentioning :

Kim es mahāraṇam ? kim vā cintāmaṇiṇva navakāro ?
Kim kappaddum sarisā ? nahu nahu tāṇam pi ahiyayaro.

किं एस महारयणं ? किं वा चिन्तामणिव नवकारो ?
 किं कप्पद्दुम सरिसा ? नहु नहु ताणं पि अहिययरो ?

Is it the wish-fulfilling gem ? Or is it like the wish-fulfilling tree ? No, No, it is even more divinely effectual.

If the *ṇamokāra mantra* is recited before a new-born it gets grandeur and wealth. If the *ṇamokāra mantra* is recited before someone on the death-bed he transmigrates to a better next life.

According to the '*Navakārasāra-stavana gāthā-3*,' It is the *śudarśana cakra* (the disc weapon) that destroys evil enemies.

Ācārya Siddhasena has defined it as (*aihi-kāmuṣmika saukhya kāmadhuk*) the divine cow that bestows happiness in this world and the world beyond.



THE PAÑCA NAMASKĀRA CAKRA

Describing the sixteen segment *namaskāra cakra* (disc) it has been mentioned in the '*Pañca paramēṣṭhī namaskāra stotra*' :

Solas-paramakkharabiya-bindu-gabbho jaguttamo joi. (36)

सोलस-परमक्खरबीय-बिन्दु-गब्धो जगुत्तमो जोइ ॥३६॥

This *pañca namaskāra cakra*, having the sixteen divine letters—*arihanta-siddha-āyariya-uvajjhāya-sāhū-* and potent nucleus and dot at its core, is the best. This *pañca namaskāra cakra* glitters like the sun. Śrī Hemacandrācārya, Śubhacandrācārya and others have termed it as *ṣoḍaśākṣarī vidyā* (the sixteen letter charishma).

Illustration : The practitioner should concentrate on each letter in each segment one by one and visualize this great disc (*mahā-cakra*) as rotating with glittering five potent initial letters of the five lines—*a-si-ā-u-sā*. With pure conscience one should chant this sixteen letter mantra every morning and evening.

This statement of the Ācārya Śrī has been clearly illustrated above :

Nasei cor-sāvaya-visahara-jala-jalaṇa-bandhaṇa sayāim,

Cintijjanto rakkhasa-raṇa-rāya bhayāim bhāveṇa. (37)

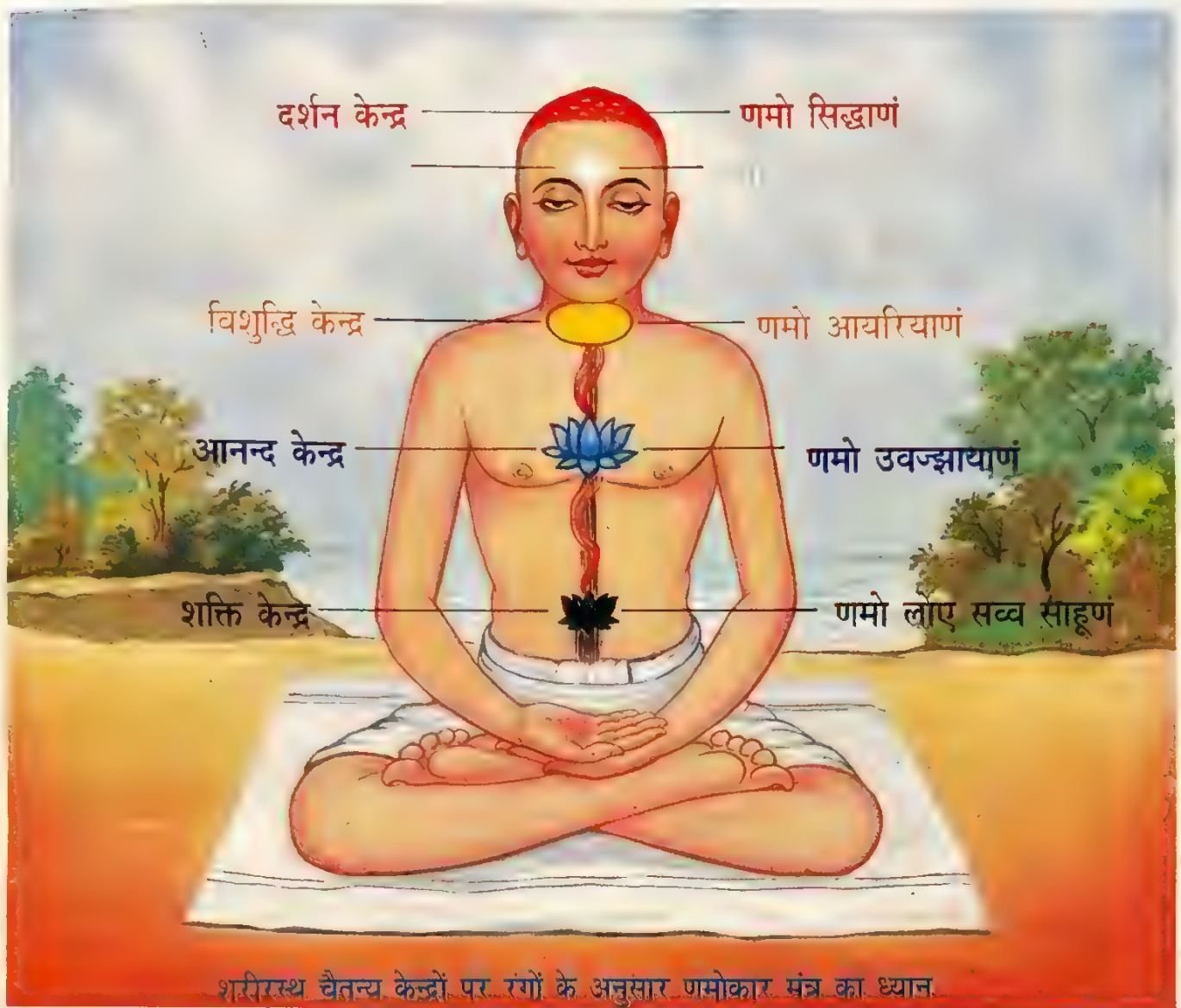
नासेइ चोर-सावय-विसहर-जल-जलण-बंधण सयाई । चिंतिज्जंतो रक्खस-रण-राय भयाई भावेण ॥३७॥

Sincere meditation over the *Namaskāra-cakra* removes all fears such as torment of thief, violent being, venomous serpent, deluge, conflagration, oppression by enemies, afflictions of demons, unfavourable stars, ghosts, etc. The coveted assets like wealth, knowledge, divine talent, and plentitude accrue automatically with the meditation. Gods, demons, kings, etc. all bow before this *maha-cakra*.

Eyaṃ kavayamabheyam khāi ya sattham parābhavaṇa rakkhā. (35)

एयं कवयमभेयं खाई य सत्तं पराभवण रक्खा ॥३५॥

This *Namaskāra cakra* protects like an impenetrable armour. As illustrated above, it is like an unassailable fort with a large moat, where no outside power can enter. It is the ultimate and sure remedy for sorrow and misery.



शरीरस्थ चैतन्य केन्द्रों पर रंगों के अनुसार णमोकार मंत्र का ध्यान

CONCENTRATION OVER THE CENTRES OF CONSCIOUSNESS : THE AWAKENING OF THE POWER OF SOUL

Our body is like a giant power-house. It has many sensory centres akin to switches. These are called *cetanā* centres (centres of conscious energy). Although there are hundreds of large and small switches (centres), but only thirteen have been specified as *cetanā* centres. Five of these centres are vital. The letters and colours associated with the *ṇamokāra mantra* have close connection with the *cetanā* centres of the body.

Observe the centres shown in the illustration. For example, the centre of knowledge is at the forehead. This centre is the fountain-head of all knowledge flowing in the body. By concentrating/chanting the *ṇamo arihantāṇam* line, focusing it at the knowledge centre with white background, the intellectual capacity is stimulated. The mind becomes active, energy starts flowing. Through long and deep practice one can attain divine perception as well.

Sitting in the posture shown in the illustration (Lotus pose) if one concentrates on these lines at the allotted centre in the specified background colour the concentration becomes deeper and also the life force in the body becomes activated. Due to the continuous flow of pure thoughts many a pleasant changes occur in the natural functions of the body and the mind.

Ācārya Śubhacandra said that—the utterance of *ṇamokāra mantra* generates an electric charge that jolts awake the centres of conscious energy and causes astonishing changes in feelings and temperament.

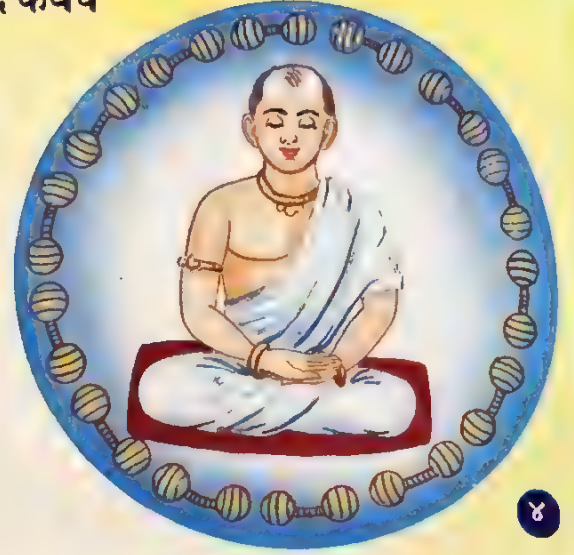
■ Awakening of the centre of knowledge improves intellect and rationality and removes aberrations. ■ Awakening of the centre of perception gives rise to refreshing feelings and inner happiness. ■ Awakening of the centre of purity enhances aura, prowess, influence and determination. ■ Awakening of the centre of bliss generates peace, concentration and happiness. ■ Awakening of the centre of power enhances tolerance and stamina.

While concentrating over these centres draw the flow of conscious energy from the centre of power and direct it slowly upwards to the centre of knowledge. And then send it back slowly to the source. Observe the wave of conscious vital energy current in the illustration carefully.

आत्म-रक्षा इन्द्र कवच



१



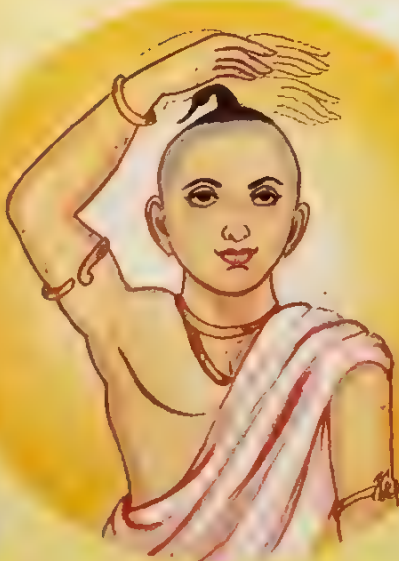
४



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५



३

- १ (हृदय पर हाथ फिराते हुए ७ बार बोलें—)
ॐ णमो अरिहंताणं हां हृदयं रक्ष रक्ष हुं फट् स्वाहा
- २ (मस्तक पर हाथ फिराते हुए ७ बार बोलें—)
ॐ णमो सिद्धाणं हीं शिरोरक्ष हुं फट् स्वाहा
- ३ (चोटी पर हाथ रखते हुए ७ बार बोलें—)
ॐ णमो आयरियाणं हूं शिखां रक्ष रक्ष हुं फट् स्वाहा ।
- ४ (अपने चारों ओर वज्र कवच की धारणा करते हुए ७ बार बोलें—)
ॐ णमो उवज्झायाणं हें एहि एहि भगवति वज्रकवचं
वज्रिणि वज्रिणि रक्ष रक्ष हुं फट् स्वाहा
- ५ (एक हाथ में वज्र एक हाथ में शूलधारण कर शत्रु को
स्तंभित करने की धारणा रखते हुए ७ बार बोलें)
ॐ णमो लोए सब्बसाहूणं हः क्षिप्रं क्षिप्रं साधय साधय
वज्रहस्ते शूलिनि दुष्टान् रक्ष रक्ष हुं फट् स्वाहा

THE INDRA-SHIELD FOR SELF-PROTECTION

- ① Waving hand over the heart repeat seven times :
'Om namo arihantāṇāṃ hrām hrdayam rakṣa rakṣa hum faṭ svāhā'
ॐ णमो अरिहंताणं हां हृदयं रक्ष रक्ष हुं फट् स्वाहा ।
- ② Waving hand over the head repeat seven times :
'Om namo siddhāṇāṃ hrīm Śīrorakṣa hum faṭ svāhā'
ॐ णमो सिद्धाणं हीं शिरोरक्ष हुं फट् स्वाहा ।
- ③ Keeping the hand over the crown of the head repeat seven times :
'Om namo āyariyāṇāṃ hrūm śikhām rakṣa rakṣa hum faṭ svāhā'
ॐ णमो आयरियाणं हूं शिखां रक्ष रक्ष हुं फट् स्वाहा ।
- ④ Visualize a strong shield around the body and repeat seven times :
'Om namo uvajjhāyāṇāṃ hrem ehi ehi bhagavatī vajrakavacam vajriṇi vajriṇi rakṣa rakṣa hum faṭ svāhā'
ॐ णमो उवज्झायाणं हें एहि एहि भगवति वज्रकवचं वज्रिणि वज्रिणि रक्ष रक्ष हुं फट् स्वाहा ।
- ⑤ Visualizing a trident in one hand and a vajra (a mythical weapon of Indra) in the other, think of making the enemy immobile and repeat seven times :
'Om namo loe savva sāhūṇāṃ hrah kṣipram kṣipram sādahaya sādahaya, vajrahaste śūlini duṣṭān rakṣa rakṣa hum faṭ svāhā'
ॐ णमो लोए सब्बसाहूणं हः क्षिप्रं क्षिप्रं साधय साधय वज्रहस्ते शूलिनि दुष्टान् रक्ष रक्ष हुं फट् स्वाहा ॥

- ⑥ Visualize an unbreakable rampart around the body and think that you are safe within this fort. Chant :

'Eso pañca ṇamokkāro vajra śīla prākāraḥ'

एसो पंच णमोकारो वज्रशिला प्राकारः

- ⑦ Around this rempart, visualize a moat filled with ambrosia. Chant :

'Savva pāvappaṇāsaṇo amṛtmayī parikhā'

सब पावप्पणासणो अमृतमयी परिखा ।

- ⑧ Visualize a barricade of fire around yourself. Chant :

'Maṅgalāṇaṃ ca savvesiṃ mahā vajrāgni prākāraḥ'

मंगलाणं च सब्वेसिं महा वज्राग्नि प्राकारः

- ⑨ Visualize a vajra (hard as diamond) rock over your head and think that you are secure from all directions. Chant :

'Paḍhamam havāi maṅgalaṃ upari vajraśīlā'

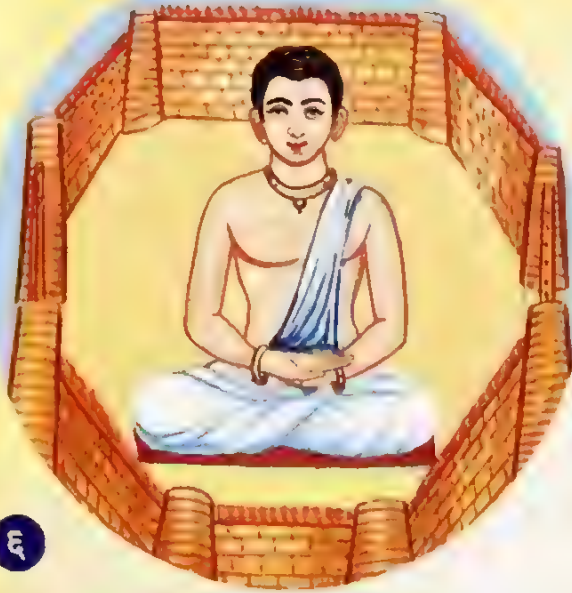
पढमं हवइ मंगलं उपरि वज्रशिला ।

- Self-protection is the most important theme in life.

According to the mantra texts one has to create a shield for self-protection before starting practice of a mantra. This is in order to avoid any fear or disturbance during the practice.

Generally speaking, if one creates the self-protection-shield of *ṇamokāra* mantra before going out of the residence every morning, he is safe from fear, trouble and accident. Any oppression or influence of evil spirits is also made ineffective.

With a strong belief, that with the prescribed method you will become completely secured, you should chant the mantra and focus on different parts of the body as detailed above. This should be accompanied by a vivid visualisation. This process creates a protective shield of aura around the practitioner. See appendix for further information.



६



७

आत्म-रक्षा इन्द्र कवच (क्रमशः)

६ एसो पंच णमोक्कारो वज्र शिला प्राकारः

(चारों तरफ वज्रमय परकोटे की धारणा करें कि इस दुर्ग में मैं सुरक्षित हूँ)

७ सब् पाव प्पणासणो अमृतमयी परिखा

(परकोटे के बाहर अमृत से भरी खाई की धारणा करें)

८ मंगलाणं च सब्बेसिं महा वज्राग्नि प्राकारः

(अपने चारों तरफ अग्निमय परकोटे की कल्पना करें)

९ पढमं हवइ मंगलं उपरि वज्रशिला

(मस्तक पर वज्र शिला धारण किये स्वयं को चारों तरफ से सुरक्षित समझें)



८

जीवन में आत्म-रक्षा सबसे महत्वपूर्ण प्रश्न है।

मंत्र शास्त्र के अनुसार कोई भी मंत्र साधना करने से पूर्व आत्मरक्षा-कवच धारण किया जाता है। ताकि साधना में किसी प्रकार का भय तथा विघ्न न आवे।

सामान्यतः प्रतिदिन प्रातः काल घर से बाहर निकलने के पूर्व; णमोकार मंत्र पाठ का आत्मरक्षा कवच धारण कर लेने से बाहरी भय, उपद्रव, दुर्घटना आदि से रक्षा होती है, दुष्ट शक्तियों का प्रभाव तथा प्रहार नहीं चल सकता।

मंत्र बोलते समय चित्र में दिखाई विधि के अनुसार शरीर के अंगों पर न्यास करना चाहिए और उसी प्रकार की भाव-संकल्पना के साथ स्वयं को सुरक्षित होने का दृढ़ विश्वास करें। विशेष परिशिष्ट में देखें।



९

MEDITATION ON COLOUR : ACCORDING TO CHROMATOLOGY

(1) Observe the white circle first—Meditate over the line '*namo arihantāṇam*' with a background white as a full moon. Meditating over the white colour imparts peace. It removes flaws. Deficiency of white colour in the body causes many ailments. Compensating this deficiency through meditation one becomes healthy. White rays enhance purity and capacity to concentrate. Tranquillity is achieved by meditation over '*namo arihantāṇam*' with a white background for ten minutes.

(2) Second circle : The second circle is red like rising sun. Meditate over the line '*namo siddhāṇam*' with the background of the red colour of the sun rising from the East. Red colour helps in controlling the pituitary gland and its secretion. It increases agility, alertness, enthusiasm and happiness. It also improves the inner vision.

(3) Third circle : The third circle is golden yellow. Vigour, splendour and influence increase by meditating over the line '*namo āyariyāṇam*' with a background of golden yellow colour. Yellow colour improves the capacity of knowledge and removes physical weakness.

(4) Fourth circle : The fourth circle is blue. Meditating over the line '*namo uvajjhāyāṇam*' with a background of blue colour increases peace and tranquillity of body and mind. Blue colour is helpful in concentration.

(5) Fifth circle : The fifth circle is black. Meditate over the line '*namo loe savva sāhūṇam*' by concentrating on the black colour. Black colour blocks attack of evil influences and ailments from outside. It improves resistance and tolerance of the body.

Method of meditation :

Focus your vision on these circles for a few seconds. Then, repeat silently the line written over these circles. Stare at the coloured circles as long as easily possible and then slowly close the eye-lids. The glow of the specific colour will be retained in your vision; the letters of the *namokāra mantra* associated with that colour will also appear.

This practice increases stability of mind and happiness. Purity, intelligence and power increase. Such visualisation of colours assists in concentrating over the centres of conscious energy in the body.

Ācārya Mānatuṅga Sūri says :

Sasi dhavalā arihantā, rattā siddhā ya śuriṇo kaṇayā,

maragayabhā uvajjhāyā, sāmā sāhū suhaṃ dintu.

ससि धवला अरिहंता, रत्ता सिद्धा य सूरिणो कणया ।

मरगयभा उवज्झाया, सामा साहू सुहं दिंतु ॥

May the *arihanta*—white as the Moon, the *siddha*—red, the *ācārya*—golden, the *upādhyāya*—blue as sapphire, and the *sādhu*—black, enhance my happiness always.

THREE SUPPORTS OF NAMOKĀRA MEDITATION

Of many mediums helpful in concentration in the *namokāra* meditation, three are considered most important. The methods of these three practices have been illustrated here.

1. The *namokāra* meditation in the *Om̐kāra*—*Om̐kāra* is the source of accousitc energy. It is the ultimate mantra. When uttered with deep breath the *Om̐* resonates in all the centres of conscious energy and triggers all the inherent potential energy.

According to the Vedic tradition *Om̐* is the seed of the trio of great powers—*Brahmā*, *Viṣṇu*, and *Maheśa*. Jain *ācāryas* have defined *Om̐* as the representation of the *Pañca Parameṣṭhī* (the five ultimate venerables).

The illustration shows that superimposing one line each on the five constituent parts of the letter *Om̐*, and meditating as per the prescribed colour scheme makes the configuration of *Om̐* appear in the inner vision in those colours only.

2. The *Navapada* (nine line) meditation in the eight petal lotus—Install the *namokāra mahā-mantra* on the eight petal lotus as illustrated. Now meditate over the *na mo ari han tā nam̐* line at the white centre of the lotus. After this, take up the four following lines of the petals of associated colours in the cardinal directions—north, south, east and west. In the end, meditate over the four auxiliary lines (*eso pañca namokkaro*, etc.) on the remaining four petals in the diagonal directions.

3. The meditation on the constituent letters—With a stable and peaceful mind visualize :

1. It is the last quarter of the night. On the endless blue sky, with the pen of breath write in large silver letters—*na mo a ri han tā nam̐*.

2. The dawn has broken and the horizon is red. Write *na mo si ddhā nam̐* in deep red colour.

3. It is noon time and the sun is on the zenith, and shines brilliant. On the sky write in yellow letters—*na mo ā ya ri yā nam̐*.

4. The sun has set. The blue sky is turning grey. Write in deep blue letters—*na mo uva jhā yā nam̐*.

5. It is midnight and all around there is deep darkness. Write in black letters—*na mo loe savva sā hū nam̐*.

With the visualization stare for few seconds on these colours and letters. Visualize the scenes described above. Keeping the illustrations in view slowly close the eye-lids and continue to visualize the scene through inner eyes.



ॐकार में नमोकार

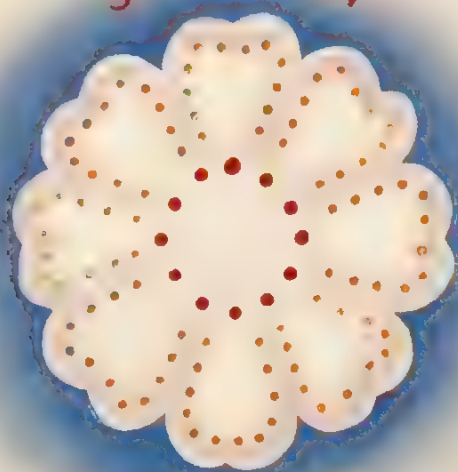


अष्टदल कमल में नवपद दयान



अक्षर माला दयान

अष्टकमल - जप



अंगुलि - जप



माला - जप



THREE METHODS OF REPEATING THE NAMOKĀRA MANTRA

To think in silence and with concentration about a line, a letter or the form of the sacred is called meditation.

To repeat in memory the lines of a mantra can be chanted in the following manner with the help of rosary beads, etc.

1. The lotus japa—Look at the eight-petal lotus. Start the japa by focusing on the first dot of the eastern petal. Repeat the full *namokāra mantra* on the dot and then shift to the second one and repeat. There are twelve dots in one petal. Going through the process once on every petal makes 96 repetitions. After this, repeat once on every red dot in the central circle. There are twelve dots here also. Altogether 108 repetitions make one *mālā* (rosary). After practicing on the illustration visualize this lotus on an imaginary screen. With closed eyes complete one *mālā* (108 japa) by repeating on each dot. This is a good method of japa without external aid.

2. Finger Japa—Of many methods of finger japa two popular ones are the circular and the conch methods. According to the illustration start at the phalanx numbered 1 and by repeating once at every phalanx proceed to number 12. Dotting this shape nine times completes 108 repetitions making it one *mālā* ($12 \times 9 = 108$ Japa).

3. Rosary Japa—Observe the illustration carefully. Sit in the lotus pose or any other convenient pose and chant shifting the rosary beads between the thumb and the middle finger of the right hand, keeping the hand near the heart. Keep the eyes and mind fixed on the bead. After reaching the last bead turn the string and start again, the parting bead or the mount bead should not be crossed.



NAMOKĀRA MANTRA CHANTING FOR PACIFYING THE NINE PLANETS (ASTROLOGICAL)

According to the mantra texts the prescribed procedure for pacifying a planet is to meditate and chant the mantra with visualization of the colour associated with that planet. The best way to remove the ill-effects of all the nine planets is to chant the five lines of the *namokāra mantra*.

Try to understand the relationship between the colours associated with the nine planets and the *namokāra mantra* as detailed in the illustration :

1. The colour of the Moon and Venus is white. To pacify these visualize white colour and repeat 1000 times the mantra—*Om hrīm namo arihantāṇam*.
2. The colour of the Sun and Mars is red. To pacify these visualize red colour and repeat 1000 times the mantra—*Om hrīm namo siddhāṇam*.
3. The colour of Jupiter is yellow. To pacify this visualize yellow colour and repeat 1000 times the mantra—*Om hrīm namo āyariyāṇam*.
4. The colour of Mercury is yellow. To pacify this visualize yellow colour and repeat 1000 times the mantra—*Om hrīm namo uvajjhāyāṇam*.
5. The colour of Saturn, Rahu (Dragon's head) and Ketu (Dragon's tail) (Rahu and Ketu are symbolic representations of discordant positions of the Sun and the Moon in association with the Earth) is black. To pacify these visualize black colour and repeat 1000 times the mantra—*Om hrīm namo loe savva sāhūṇam*.

More details about the mantras and chanting for the planets is given in appendix.



NINE LINE ṆAMOKĀRA : THE KEY TO SUCCESS

Long long ago, king *Prajāpāla* ruled over *Avantī (Ujjayinī)*. He had two beautiful and cultured daughters. The name of the elder one was *Surasundarī* and that of the younger one was *Maināsundarī*.

Maināsundarī was a very refined, educated and independent thinking girl. Pleased with her talent and intelligence, King *Prajāpāla* told once, “Dear Daughter, I am very pleased with you, seek any favour, I will grant.”

With folded hands *Maināsundarī* replied. “Father ! boons, happiness and sorrow are not alms that may be obtained by begging. As a result of his own deeds or by luck, one automatically gets these. Moreover, I am a *kṣatriya* (martial race) girl, where would I learn begging?”

King *Prajāpāla* was short tempered and conceited. *Maināsundarī*’s expression of self esteem hurt his ego. He decided that *Mainā* is very proud of her luck; she should be taught that it is king *Prajāpāla* who bestows happiness and sorrow, not fate.

One day King *Prajāpāla* went out of town. He saw a group of lepers coming. A young leper was riding a horse and many others followed him on foot. They were coming in his direction hailing their leader, “Victory to *Umber Rāṇā*.”

The king asked them, “Who are you ? Whence are you coming ? Who is this young man ?”



A leper, who was an accomplished speaker, came forward. Saluting the King he said, "Sire ! Wandering through many villages, this group of seven hundred lepers has reached your town today. *Umber Rāṇā*, the person on horseback, is the leader of this group. Being lepers, we are not allowed to settle anywhere. Driven from many villages we have arrived here today."

When king *Prajāpāla* further enquired about *Umber Rāṇā* it was revealed that he was still unmarried. He thought, "*Maināsundarī* is very proud of her luck. If she is married to leper *Umber Rāṇā* she will realize that who bestows happiness and sorrow, the karma or the king....."

The ministers, priests and the queen, all opposed this plan but the king was very adamant. He married his beautiful and intelligent daughter to *Umber Rāṇā*.

Mainā did not weep, nor did she become angry. She accepted this as her fate. She took leave of her parents happily and went to a tent outside the town with her leper husband, *Umber Rāṇā*.

Seeing such a beautiful and well-mannered daughter-in-law, *Kamalaprabhā*, the mother of *Umber Rāṇā*, thanked her stars. It was as if she got a divine boat of happiness and hope, to cross the ocean of sorrow and misery.

At night *Umber Rāṇā's* mother asked the couple to sit near her and said, "Princess, Dear daughter-in-law ! don't you worry. We are also *kṣatriyas* (of martial race); your husband is prince *Śrīpāla* of *Campānagarī*. He is not a leper by birth. An adversary king defeated us. *Śrīpāla's* father, king *Simharatha* was killed. *Śrīpāla's* uncle also conspired against us and to save our life we eloped into the jungle. There we met this group of lepers. *Śrīpāla* caught this disease due to years of exposure during our long stay with them. Now that you have come, good luck has dawned. Everything will be alright now."

नवपद आराधना



Maināsundarī took charge of all the seven hundred lepers besides attending to her husband and mother-in-law. An end had come to the misery of the lepers, as if they were blessed with the presence of a goddess among them.

One day a great monk, *Ācārya Municandrasūrī* arrived at the garden outside the town. When *Maināsundarī* knew of this, she also went with her husband to pay respect to the monk. When the *Ācārya* saw such a beautiful and elegant girl married to a leper he enquired. *Maināsundarī* narrated the whole story. Observing the patience, determination and self-confidence of *Maināsundarī* the *Ācārya* said :

“Child ! practice the nine step discipline of the *Ṇamokāra* mantra and all your ailments, sorrows and miseries will be removed. Indeed, this mantra is effective beyond any imagination. Its practice will bring you best of luck.”

Following the instructions of the *Ācārya*, *Śrīpāla* and *Maināsundarī* commenced the practice of the nine steps of the *Ṇamokāra mahāmantra* on the bright seventh day of the month of Caitra. This practice is accompanied by the *Āyambīla Tapa* (a Jain penance where food prepared with one type of grain and that too without any salt, sugar or flavour is taken once a day) with deep devotion and unwavering faith.

The method of practice is as follows :

Drawing in heart or on a white sheet of cloth or visualizing the shape of an eight petal lotus install the nine lines and concentrate on them.

See the installation in the illustration.



And then—

1. On the first day, chant 12 rosaries (12 x 108 repetitions) of *Om hrīm śrīm ṇamo arihantāṇaṃ*. Do *āyambīla* with rice.
2. On the second day, chant 8 rosaries of the mantra—*Om hrīm śrīm ṇamo siddhāṇaṃ*. Do *āyambīla* with wheat.
3. On the third day, chant 36 rosaries of the mantra—*Om hrīm śrīm ṇamo āyariyāṇaṃ*. Do *āyambīla* with gram.
4. On the fourth day, chant 25 rosaries of the mantra—*Om hrīm śrīm ṇamo uvajjhāyāṇaṃ*. Do *āyambīla* with mūṅga (kidney bean).
5. On the fifth day, chant 27 rosaries of the mantra—*Om hrīm śrīm ṇamo loe savva saḥūṇaṃ*. Do *āyambīla* with uḍada (horse bean).
6. On the sixth day, chant 51 rosaries of the mantra—*Om hrīm śrīm ṇamo ṇāṇassa*. Do *āyambīla* with rice.
7. On the seventh day, chant 67 rosaries of the mantra—*Om hrīm śrīm ṇamo dāmsaṇassa*. Do *āyambīla* with rice.
8. On the eighth day, chant 70 rosaries of the mantra—*Om hrīm śrīm ṇamo carittassa*. Do *āyambīla* with rice.
9. On the ninth day, chant 50 rosaries of the mantra—*Om hrīm śrīm ṇamo tavassa*. Do *āyambīla* with rice.

With pious feelings and purity of mind, speech and body *Śrīpāla* and *Maināsundarī* completed the devotional practice of the Navapada in prescribed order. Astonishing changes appeared in *Śrīpāla*. His leprosy was cured. His physical appearance became attractive. His body oozed strength and prowess.

All the lepers were also cured by sprinkling water that was made potent with the *ṇamokāra* mantra. *Śrīpāla*'s luck turned extremely good. Wherever he went he got great wealth and power without asking. Every problem continued to be resolved. Finally *Śrīpāla* became a great emperor having an army of millions. The *ṇamokāra* mantra found a permanent place in their heart. As a result of practicing *ṇamokara* mantra they got happiness and appreciation at every point in their life.

(*Śrīpāla-Caritra*)



THE DELIVERANCE OF THE PAIR OF SERPENTS

This is about three thousand years old episode. The king of *Varaṇasī* (Benaras) was *Aśvasena*. His queen was *Vāmādevī* and their son was prince *Pārśvakumāra*.

Once, riding a horse young *Pārśvakumāra* went out of town. At a place he saw a large crowd. The prince approached there and found that an ascetic was busy in the five-fire penance. On four corners of a square logs of wood were burning, he was sitting within the square and the noon sun was scorching him from the top (the fifth fire). Hundreds of people were standing around him watching.

The thought that the prince has come for his *darśana* (to visit to pay respect) boosted the ego of the *Kamaṭha* ascetic. The people around also started singing his praise. At that moment the prince pointed at the logs and told his servants. "Look there, a live pair of snakes is burning in that big log in the fire. Take it out and save the snakes."

As the servants approached the fire to take out the log the ascetic warned them, "Stop there ! I am doing the five-fire penance. If you try to disturb, I shall burn you to ashes."

Soberly the prince said, "O worthy ascetic ! What sort of penance is this? Live snakes are burning in this fire and you are not even allowing to save them. To burn a being is not penance. Pity and compassion should be essential part of every penance."

The *Kamaṭha* ascetic turned red with anger and stared at prince *Pārśva* with burning eyes. But the fearless and compassionate prince ordered his servants, "This is not the time to argue. Save the snakes at once. Bring them out of the flames."



The servants dragged the log out of the fire and split it carefully, A pair of long black snakes dropped out of the log. Almost half of their bodies were scorched by the fire, the poor creatures were writhing with agony on the sand.

Seeing the half scorched and writhing snakes the ascetic was wonder-struck. The people around started praising the astounding divine knowledge, courage and compassion of the prince—thanks to you ! O compassionate prince ! Without you this pair of snakes would have turned to ashes in this fire.

The prince got down from the horse and came near the pair of serpents. He uttered in reassuring voice, “O king of serpents ! this is the last moment of your life. Bear the pain calmly. I am reciting the *ṇamokāra mantra*. Listen peacefully and your life-to-come will improve.” And then the sweet sound of *Ṇamo Arihantāṇaṁ, Ṇamo Siddhāṇaṁ*filled the surroundings.

The pair of snakes heard the sweet voice of the prince. They felt as if the soothing Sandal-ointment had been applied on their blistered bodies. Peace flooded their souls. With the sound of *ṇamo arihantāṇaṁ*..... entering their ears, they passed away with purity of thoughts at the last moment.

Hearing the *Pañca Parameṣṭhi mantra* during the last moments of their life, their souls reincarnated as ruling gods of the *Nāgakumāra* clan (a class of gods associated with serpents). They were born as *Dharaṇendra* and his consort, *Padmāvati*. When they recognised their benefactor, prince *Pāśva*, they greeted him humbly from their own abode. The sound of *Ṇamo Arihantāṇaṁ*..... *ṇamo siddhāṇaṁ*.....resonated every cell of their body.



After some time prince *Pārśva* became a monk and went into jungle for meditational practices. Due to his public insult the *Kamaṭha* ascetic was full of anger. His evil thoughts during the last moments of his life caused him to take rebirth as the demon *Meghamālī*.

When he saw Lord *Pārśvanātha* meditating in the jungle he recalled his enmity of previous life. Burning with the fire of vengeance he created a number of terrible disturbances to the meditating Lord. In order to drown Lord *Pārśva* he caused heavy rains. Floods inundated the area where *Pārśvanātha* was standing in meditation. With tearing force the water level rose to *Pārśvanātha's* chest.

This terrible predicament rocked the seat of the god *Dharaṇendra*. He rushed to the rescue of the meditating Lord. He created a lotus throne under the feet of the Lord. As the water level rose the lotus throne also rose. He also created a five-headed-serpent-canopy over the Lord. *Dharaṇendra* himself, with his consort, *Padmāvatī*, stood in attendance.

Dharaṇendra challenged the demon *Meghamālī*, who ran away with fear. The disturbance disappeared.

Dharaṇendra and *Padmāvatī*, the devoted subjects of their benefactor—Lord *Pārśva*, remove the miseries and fulfil desires of the devotees of Lord *Pārśvanātha* even today.

—*Pārśvanātha Caritra*



THE MIRACLE OF ṆAMOKĀRA : DEFEAT OF EVIL POWER

There was a beautiful garden outside the city of *Rājagṛha*. It was named *Guṇaśilaka*. *Arjuna Mālī* was the guard of this garden.

One morning while *Arjuna* was picking flowers with his wife *Bandhumatī*, six gangsters came there. Seeing *Arjuna's* young and beautiful wife they were consumed by passion. All six ruffians joined to tie up *Arjuna* and raped his wife in his presence.

Arjuna boiled with anger. But as he was tied up he could not even throw a pebble. Right in front was the temple of his family deity *Mudgara-Pāṇi Yakṣa*. In the state of excitement *Arjuna* addressed the *Yakṣa*, "O family deity ! till to day I have served you and prayed you with great devotion. I believed you to be a god, but today it has been revealed that you are not a god, you are a mere stone-statue. In your temple, before my own eyes, these rascals are violating my wife and you are reduced to a mute witness. Had you had even a trace of power you would not have allowed this torture."

Uttering these words *Arjuna* was consumed by a storm of anger and remorse. The next moment an intense current flowed through his body. He shook his body with all his strength and the bonds were broken. *Arjuna* lifted the large mace that was in the hands of the idol of the *Yakṣa*. He shouted a challenge to the ruffians and within a moment killed his wife and all the six gangsters. The intensity of his anger was such that he turned into a psychopathic killer and roamed around with the mace in his hand. He would kill whoever came in his way. Full of rage, *Arjuna* started killing six men and a woman everyday.

Terrible waves of terror engulfed the town of *Rājagṛha*. The town gates were closed in apprehension.

One day Lord *Mahāvīra* arrived in the *Guṇaśilaka* garden outside the town of *Rājagṛha*. No one came out of the town to see Lord *Mahāvīra* due to the terror of *Arjuna*.



Sudarśana, the son of a merchant, had a surge of devotional feelings. He resolved that he will go to the garden alone to behold *Lord Mahāvīra*. He will win over violence with *Ahimsā* (non-violence) and destroy fear with courage.

See Illustration-1 : With the strength of unflinching determination and unwavering faith *Sudarśana* greets his parents and seeks their permission. Knowing of his intention to go out of town his parents became apprehensive. But could not move *Sudarśana* from his resolve. The doors were closed as soon as *Sudarśana* went out.

Sudarśana had but taken a few steps when the maniac *Arjuna* rushed at him like an angry mad elephant. Holding the mace in hand *Arjuna* appeared to be Satan himself. *Sudarśana* held his ground. He venerated *Lord Mahāvīra* silently and taking the vow of *Sāgārī Santhārā* (a temporary resolve to abandon the mundane body) transcended into the meditation of *Ṇamokāra Mantra*.

See Illustration-2. Focusing his thoughts he created the protective Shield of *Ṇamokāra Mantra* around his body. The five divine orbs of the five lines glittered like a steel armour around him. *Arjuna* with mace in his raised hand froze, as if someone had shackled his limbs. The divine power of the orbs around *Sudarśana* had subdued him. He could not even shift. His eyes were blinded. Within seconds the evil spirit possessing him eloped. Listless, *Arjuna* collapsed. The mace fell away.

Seeing fallen and unconscious *Arjuna* *Sudarśana* concluded his meditation. Chanting *ṇamokāra mantra* he stepped forward and helped *Arjuna* get up. *Sudarśana's* touch brought *Arjuna* back to normalcy. He fell down on *Sudarśana's* feet and said, "O devoted one ! pardon this sinful murderer. In my mad anger I have committed hundreds of murders. There is no hope, now, of my deliverance."

Sudarśana comforted *Arjuna* tenderly and reassured him. He brought him to *Lord Mahāvīra* and from a sinner made him a devotee. With the help of the *ṇamokāra mantra*, *Sudarśana* saved himself and reformed a cruel sinner.



THE ALL PROTECTING NAMOKĀRA MANTRA

King *Bimbisāra Śreṇika* of Magadha was building a new palace with great enthusiasm. But all the work done during the day would collapse during the night. This worried king *Śreṇika*. He tried various solutions but in vain. Some traditional idiosyncratic pundit said, "This appears to be some satanic spell. As such a man having 32 auspicious symbols should be sacrificed to appease the haunting spirit.

A search for a person with auspicious symbols was launched. The king declared—"Any person, having 32 auspicious signs and ready to offer himself for sacrifice will be rewarded with gold equivalent to his body-weight."

A poor Brahmin woman had four sons. One of her sons was *Amara kumāra*. He was about twelve years old and was endowed with 32 auspicious signs. His mother thought that if they got gold equivalent to *Amara's* weight rest of the members of the family will be able to get the means of their livelihood. The greed for gold made to sell her son to the king's men.

Amara kumāra brought before the king and gold coins of equivalent weight were given to the Brahmin lady.

Amara kumāra humbly pleaded before the king, ministers, priests and all, "Please do not kill me. I am very afraid of dying. Let me go." But no one felt pity for him. The king was pursuing his self interest, how could he let the boy go?



According to the instructions of the priests, *Amara kumāra* was washed, adorned with flowers and brought to the sacrificial pyre under guard. He was sanctified by chanting mantras and prepared to be put in the sacred fire. The flames of the *Yajña* pyre gave krepes to *Amara Kumāra*. He repeatedly begged before the priests, "Please do not kill me, kindly do not kill me." But everyone remained unmoved. None tried to save him. *Amara kumāra* looked around with utter hopelessness evident on his face. There was no saviour.

Seeing the grinning face of death in the flames *Amara kumāra* recalled the *ṇamokāra mantra* he had learned in his childhood. The guru had told him, "This king of mantras protects everyone. It pacifies the torments of deluge, fire, venom, etc."

Now, that was the only refuge open to *Amara kumāra*. He started chanting *ṇamokāra mantra* devotedly. He silently submitted, "O great mantra ! you alone can save me today. In this world I have no saviour but you. I seek your protection."

The chanting of the mantra made *Amara kumāra* free of fear. His face gleamed with happiness. Just then, the priests lifted and tossed him into the leaping flames. He simply continued to chant *ṇamo arihantāṇaṃ, ṇamo siddhāṇaṃ.....*



Miracle, what an astonishing miracle ! The leaping flames turned into a pond full of water. A beautiful throne appeared on the surface. *Amara kumāra* was seated on the throne, attired in attractive cloths and ornaments. Even now he was deeply engrossed in the meditation of the *ṇamokāra mantra*.

King *Śreṇika*, his ministers and priests all gapped in wonder. They thought that the boy had divine power. Apprehensive of some impending danger their hearts pounded and limbs trembled. They greeted *Amara kumāra* humbly with folded hands :

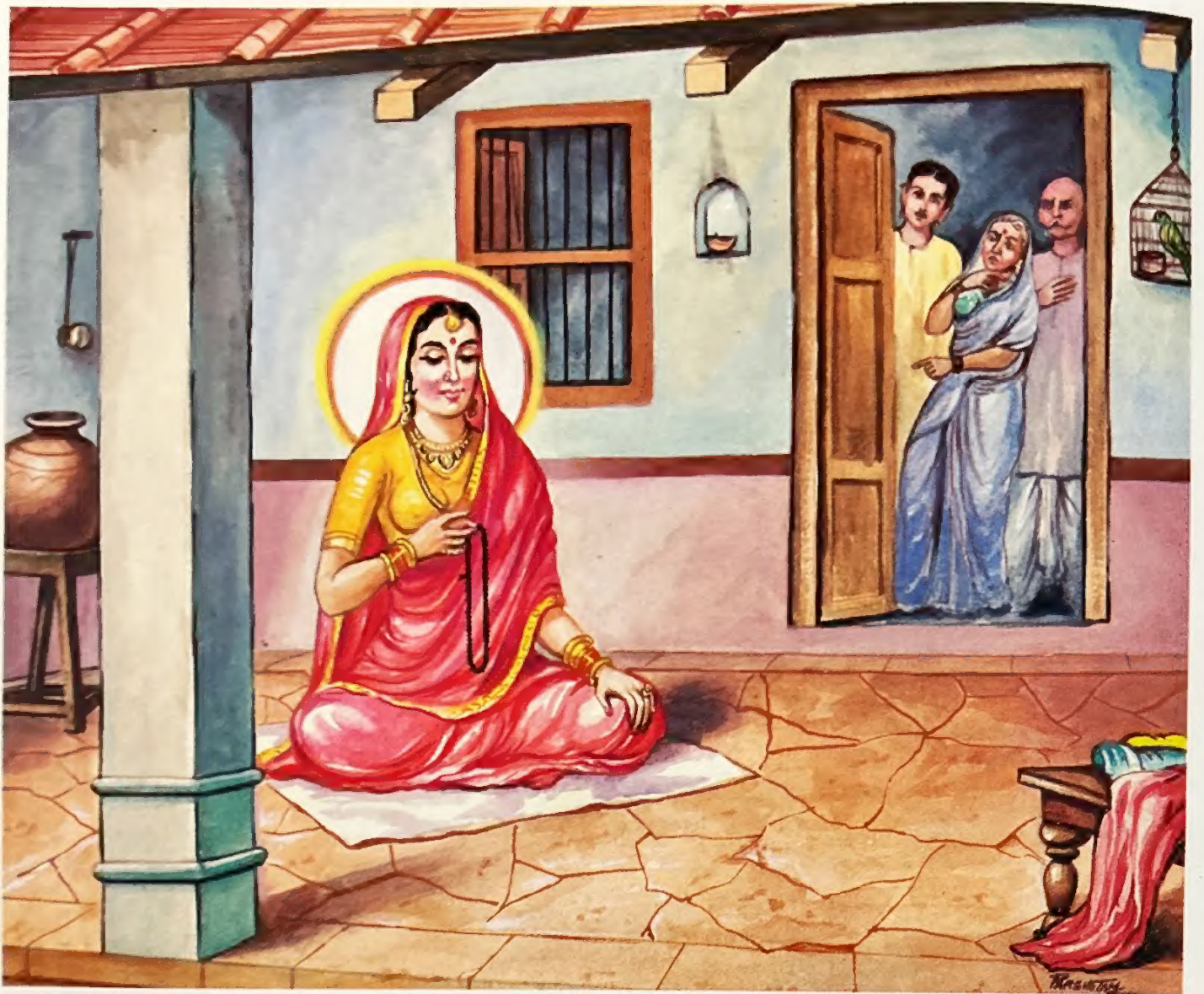
“O prince of gods ! pardon our misdeeds. Protect us. We have committed a mistake.”

Amara kumāra was moved with compassion. He lifted his hand in a gesture of assurance and uttered, “*Ṇamo Arihantāṇaṃ, ṇamo siddhāṇaṃ, ṇamo āyariyāṇaṃ, ṇamo uvajjhāyāṇaṃ, ṇamo loe savva sāhūṇaṃ*”

May this *mahāmantra* bless you with wisdom and protect all.

After this incident king *Śreṇika* became a devout Jain.

The faith in the *ṇamokāra mantra* grew stronger in all.



POISONOUS SNAKE BECOMES A GARLAND OF FLOWERS

This is an incident hundreds of years old. A merchant named *Dhanagupta* had a daughter named *Śrīmatī* or *Somalatā*. In beauty she was like the moon and in virtues like *Lakṣmī* (goddess of wealth) and *Saraswatī* (the goddess of wisdom). Her mother had imbibed religious values in her since her childhood. When she started speaking, the first thing she learned to utter was the *ṇamokāra mantra*.

When commencing any work, *Śrīmatī* would pause for a moment and meditate over her favourite deities uttering.....*ṇamo arihantāṇaṃ, ṇamo siddhāṇaṃ*....This would fill her with a renewed enthusiasm and energy. She succeeded in all, she did. She loved the *ṇamokāra mantra* more than her life, it was the anchor of her life.

Buddhapriya, a young man from the same town, fell in love with the intelligent, beautiful, cultured and responsible *Śrīmatī*. He started making efforts to get her hand in marriage.

The primary condition put by the merchant *Dhanagupta* was that the groom should be religious and virtuous. *Buddhapriya* put up a convincing show of pretended religiosity and *Dhanagupta* fell for it. Consequently *Buddhapriya* married and brought *Śrīmatī* home.

The moment *Śrīmatī* stepped in her husband's house she got a jolt. She observed that her husband and his parents were against Jain religion. They were also against her religious activities and *ṇamokāra mantra*. They stared hatefully whenever she meditated or chanted *ṇamokāra* and *sāmāyika*. But *Śrīmatī* was not disturbed, she had full faith in her strong devotion.



Next morning the first thing she did was chanting *ṇamokāra mantra* and then she did *sāmāyika* (a specific Jain meditation). Her parents-in-law did not like it at all. Even *Buddhapriya* repeatedly admonished her not to chant *ṇamokāra mantra* or indulge in any other rituals. But *Śrīmatī*, having complete and unconstrained faith in her religious belief, did not stop her practices of *ṇamokāra mantra*. This irritated her scheming mother-in-law and she planned to eliminate *Śrīmatī*. She also made her son join the conspiracy.

Buddhapriya went to a snake charmer and brought a black cobra in a pitcher. He put the pitcher on a table and addressed *Śrīmatī*, "Darling, look here, I have brought a garland of beautiful flowers for you. It is in that pitcher, take it out and adorn yourself."

Śrīmatī was in habit of chanting *ṇamokāra mantra* thrice before doing any work.....

....She paused, chanted *ṇamokāra mantra*, and with a smile put her hand in the pitcher. She took out a beautiful and fragrant garland of fresh flowers. "Oh ! how beautiful !", she asked her husband, "My dear, you should wear such a beautiful garland first."

She approached her husband with the garland in her hands. Her husband saw the hissing black snake instead of the garland and froze with panic. He stepped back fearfully, "No! No! not me. You must wear it."

Hidden behind the door, the in-laws were also witnessing the proceedings, "O god ! black magic or what? The garland in the hands of *Śrīmatī*, turns into a black cobra when it is brought near our son," they thought.



Śrīmātī insisted on putting the garland in her husband's neck and the poor husband sweated profusely due to fear of the serpent.

At last the in-laws entered and said to *Śrīmātī*, "Daughter-in-law, you should wear this garland."

Śrīmātī chanted *ṇamokāra mantra* and put the venomous and hissing snake around her neck, believing it to be a garland. Everyone present became astonished. Indeed, she is a great woman. Her in-laws and husband uttered with folded hands—

"*Śrīmātī*, we beg your pardon. We had put a black snake in this pitcher to kill you. But, luckily for you, it turned into a garland of flowers. You are great; indeed, you are divine; you are *Lakṣmī* (the goddess of wealth)."

Śrīmātī folded her hands and said to all present, "Mother, this is the miracle of the *ṇamokāra mahāmantra*. I chant the *ṇamokāra mantra* three times just before commencing any work."

The mother-in-law said, "Daughter-in-law ! teach us also this mantra."

Śrīmātī said, "Of course, speak with me..... *ṇamo Arihantāṇaṃ, ṇamo siddhāṇaṃ, ṇamo āyariyāṇaṃ*....."

Since that day *Buddhapriya* turned into a truly religious person. Everyone made *ṇamokāra mahāmantra* the anchor of their life.